

TOP SECRET

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GENERAL

1. Poland continues to use coal as strategic export:

Following a series of conversations with members of the Dutch, Danish, Belgian, Swedish and Finnish diplomatic missions in Warsaw, the US Embassy in Warsaw reports that Poland continues to use coal as its "strategic export." The Embassy adds that the Polish Government apparently watches carefully its imports of strategic goods from the West.

When these imports lag behind agreed delivery schedules, the Polish Government quickly cuts off its deliveries of coal to the country at fault.

This policy was recently applied against Denmark until it was able to assure Poland that delivery of automotive spare parts under the 1950 Polish-Danish trade agreement would be forthcoming. Currently, Austria is faced with a cessation of coal deliveries unless it can deliver to Poland 30,000 dollars worth of ball bearings in November and 16,000 dollars worth in December.

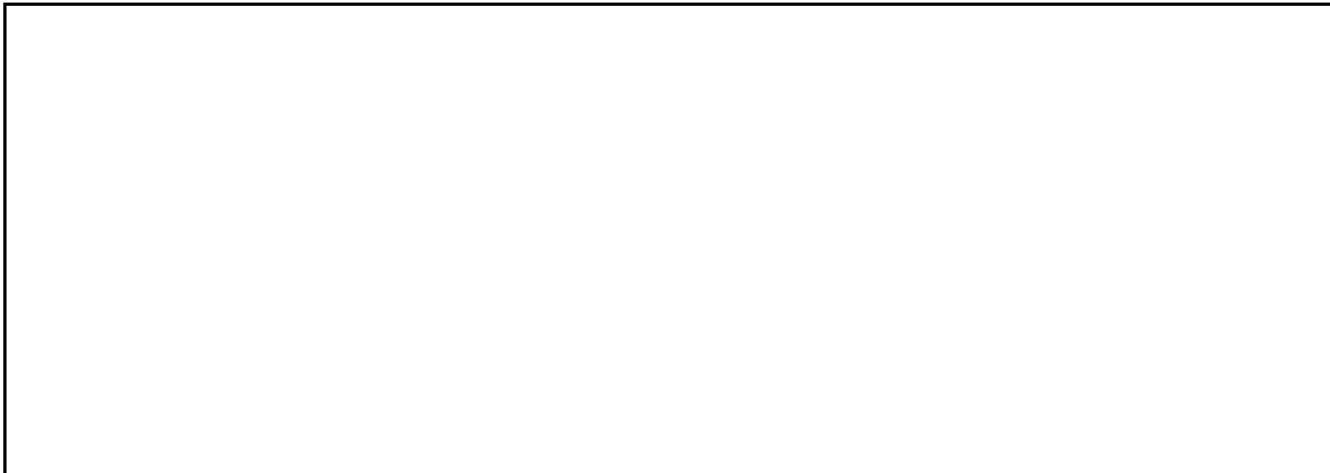
Comment: Poland can be expected to continue this policy as long as a shortage of coal exists in Western Europe.

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. British authorize partial ban on Egyptian oil supplies:

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Prime Minister Churchill has authorized the British military authorities in the Suez Canal zone to stop the shipment of oil by rail for twenty-four hours weekly, and by road for six hours a week. The British Foreign Office states that should Egyptian oil stocks fall dangerously low the ban would be re-examined.

The US Embassy in London reports that the Foreign Office gave the impression it did not seriously oppose this decision and that even the British Ambassador in Cairo did not think it would have disastrous results. Foreign Office officials admit hoping that the ban will have a "salutary" effect on the Egyptians.

Comment: Despite this report, information from Cairo indicates that the British Ambassador has been strenuously opposing attempts of the army to reimpose the fuel oil ban. The US Ambassador in Cairo has also emphasized repeatedly the extreme danger of tampering with the oil supply.

The availability of domestic oil is directly affected by this British tactic because storage facilities in the major cities of Cairo and Alexandria are limited and therefore distribution is on a hand-to-mouth basis.

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4. Egyptian King receives leader of the Moslem Brotherhood:

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King Farouk has granted an audience to the head of the fanatic Moslem Brotherhood, the first time the King has received a representative of an extremist group. The meeting was reportedly arranged by the Minister of Interior, who wished to gain the assistance of the Palace in his effort to maintain calm outside the Suez Canal zone. The US Ambassador in Cairo adds that there is serious doubt as to how long the present moderate leader of the Moslem Brotherhood will be followed by the rank and file.

Comment: The serious concern with which Egyptian officials view the situation is underscored by this royal audience. Since the governmental ban against the Moslem Brotherhood was only partially lifted last spring, a considerable number of the extremists have preferred to remain underground. The government has not yet shown itself able to control this underground group, which is probably responsible for a large part of the recent terrorist acts in the Canal area.

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6. Comment on arrest of Rudolf Slansky:

The Czechoslovak radio on 27 November announced the dismissal and arrest of Vice Premier Rudolf Slansky, former Secretary General of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. In a surprise move simultaneous with the government reorganization of 7 September, Slansky lost his powerful position in the Party, although he was retained on the new seven-man Party Politburo, and was given the post of Vice Premier in the government.

This party reorganization decentralized power within the party, although the party position of President Gottwald vis-a-vis Slansky was improved. Slansky, who was a good "Moscow" Communist, may have been removed either because he was reaching a position of too much personal power within the party, or because he was held responsible for the present economic crisis in Czechoslovakia. The official announcement accused him of subversive activities.

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